

# Mobile phone policy

Oasis Academy Pinewood



**Approved by:** Jenni Elliott **Date:** September 2019

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## 1. Introduction and aims

At Oasis Academy Pinewood, we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents and volunteers
- Support the school's policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour:
  - Keeping Children Safe in Education
  - Safeguarding Policy
  - Staff Code of Conduct
  - GDPR Policy
  - Health & Safety Policy

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school, such as:

- Risks to child protection
- Data protection issues (GDPR)
- Potential for lesson/playground disruption
- Potential for incidents such as cyber bullying or unkind comments by children on social media outside of the academy day
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

### 2.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) are responsible for enforcing this policy.

Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the school, must alert a member of staff if they witness, or are aware of, a breach of this policy.

The Principal is responsible for monitoring the policy every two years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

### **3. Use of mobile phones by staff**

#### **3.1 Personal mobile phones**

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone for any purpose in sight or hearing of pupils. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staff room or an empty classroom). During wrap around care sessions it is acknowledged that mobile phones may be the only point of contact with staff family members (and the school office may be shut to receive emergency calls). In these instances, phone volumes can be kept on but the phone should be kept out of reach or sight of the children at all times.

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time. For instance:

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

The principal or deputy principal will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number [01708 743000] as a point of emergency contact.

#### **3.2 Data protection**

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information.

Further information can be found in the GDPR and Acceptable use of Technologies Policies.

#### **3.3 Safeguarding**

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents/carers or pupils, including connecting through social media and messaging apps.

It is acknowledged that staff who also have children attending Oasis Academy Pinewood may have pre-existing acquaintances amongst the parents/carers/staff of children at Oasis Academy Pinewood. These staff parents/carers must adhere to the staff code of conduct and safeguarding policy at all times if they have mobile phone contact/social media contact with other parents/carers.

Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents or pupils.

Staff must not use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment.

It is also acknowledged that staff may have social media acquaintances that are staff members who are also parents/carers of children at the school. Staff members should follow the staff code of conduct and safeguarding policy at all times when interacting with them.

#### **3.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes**

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones for work. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Emergency evacuations

- › Supervising off-site trips
- › Supervising residential visits
- › Accessing school emails

In these circumstances, staff will:

- › Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct
- › Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil
- › Refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

If staff are in a situation where they may need to give out a phone number to make contact with parents/carers a school pay as you go phone should be used. These are kept in the school office. Please check these are topped up before requesting them.

### **3.5 Work phones**

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes.

Only authorised staff are permitted to use school phones, and access to the phone must not be provided to anyone without authorisation by the Principal or in her absence the Deputy Principal.

Staff must:

- › Only use phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet
- › Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct.

### **3.6 Sanctions**

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.

See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

## **4. Use of mobile phones by pupils**

Only year 5 and 6 pupils who are permitted to travel to school alone are allowed to bring their mobile phones to school. No other child is permitted to do so. The only exception is during some online safety lessons and when this is permitted a letter requiring consent from parents/carers will be sent home for signing.

Phones belonging to children who travel to school alone must be switched off then handed in to a member of staff at the start of the day and locked away for the duration of the school day. They will then be handed back at the end of the day by a member of staff. The children are responsible for ensuring they collect their phone.

Children are not permitted to use their mobile phones on the school grounds.

The school is not responsible for any loss, damage or theft of mobile phones and year five and six parents/carers allow their children to bring their phones in at their own risk.

Children are not permitted to bring their phones to school events such as summer fairs or school discos.

### **4.1 Sanctions**

Pupils are not permitted to use their mobile phones on the school site. If they are found to have done so, the school behaviour policy will be applied and the phone may be confiscated if the Principal or Deputy deem it necessary.

If the phone is confiscated, it must be locked away and only returned to a parent/carer.

If deemed necessary, the child may be barred from bringing their mobile phone to school.

If a member of staff has reason to believe that the phone contains inappropriate images or is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury then a decision can be made by the Principal or Deputy in her absence to search the phone.

Parent/carers should make the academy aware of any incidents regarding the misuse of mobile phones by pupils including inappropriate messages, sexting, online bullying, prejudice based abuse etc.

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously, and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- › Sexting
- › Threats of violence or assault
- › Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

## 5. Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers and visitors

Parents, visitors and volunteers (including hub councillors and contractors) must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are on the school site during the school day.

This means:

- › Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it's a public event (such as a school fair or performance), or of their own child
- › Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting these on social media
- › Not using phones in lessons, or when working with pupils
- › Not approaching children during school time while using their mobile phones even if this is their own child

If it is found that parents/carers visitors or contractors are not adhering to this policy the academy will consider stopping the taking of photos or videos during public events.

All mobile phones must be switched to silent when visiting classrooms or attending performances.

Parents/carers must remain seated during performances if taking photos or recording a video of their child.

Parents or volunteers supervising school trips, helping on site or on residential visits must not:

- › Use their phone to make contact with other parents
- › Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil
- › Post anything on social media related to the school or children

Parents or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils using their phones, as set out in section 4 above.

Parents must use the school office as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the school day. They must not try to contact their child on his/her personal mobile during the school day.

## 6. Loss, theft or damage

All parents/carers of year five or six children must complete a permission form for their children to bring a mobile phone to school if their child travels to school alone.

Pupils bringing phones to school must ensure that they give their phones in first thing in the morning so they are stored securely when not in use.

Pupils must secure their phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Staff must also secure their personal phones, as well as any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from school.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the safe, which is located in the academy office.

Lost phones should be returned to the office manager. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

## **7. Monitoring and review**

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact of pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Feedback from parents and pupils
- Feedback from teachers
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations

## 8. Appendix 1: Code of conduct/acceptable use agreement for pupils at Oasis Academy Pinewood

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone to school:

1. You may not use your mobile phone during lessons, unless the teacher specifically allows you to.
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
3. You may not use your mobile phone during the school day or on the school grounds. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils.
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils.
5. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
6. Don't share your phone's passwords or access codes with anyone else.
7. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
  - a. Email
  - b. Text/messaging app
  - c. Social media
8. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal.
9. Rules on bullying, harassment, and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone apply even when you aren't in school. Oasis Academy Pinewood may well apply the school's behaviour policy if you do break any of these rules
10. Don't use inappropriate, obscene unkind or derogatory language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the school's behaviour policy.
11. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or turn over, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.

## 9. Appendix 2: Permission form for pupils to use mobile phones during lessons

| PUPIL AND LESSON DETAILS     |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b>Pupil name:</b>           |  |
| <b>Date:</b>                 |  |
| <b>Class/lesson details:</b> |  |

| PURPOSE |
|---------|
|         |

### Pupil agreement

I understand that I am being allowed to use my phone during lesson time as part of an educational or class activity.

I will not use my phone for any other purpose than the one listed above. If my teacher, or any other member of staff, finds that I'm using my phone for any other reason, I understand that it will be confiscated.

I understand that the school's code of conduct and mobile phone policy on the use of mobile phones still applies.

Pupil signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### 10. Appendix 3: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school

Use this form if you don't normally allow pupils to bring their phones to school, but are granting an exception.

It should be signed by parents. In secondary schools, it may also be appropriate to get pupils to sign.

| PUPIL DETAILS             |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Pupil name:</b>        |  |
| <b>Year group/class:</b>  |  |
| <b>Parent(s) name(s):</b> |  |

The school has agreed to allow \_\_\_\_\_ to bring his/her mobile phone to school because he/she:

(delete as required)

- Travels to and from school alone
- Is a young carer
- Is attending a school trip or residential where use of mobile phones will be allowed
- Needs the phone for an educational activity during class time
- Attends before or after-school where a mobile phone is required for the activity, or to contact parents

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its behaviour policy and mobile phone policy.

The school reserves the right revoke permission if pupils don't abide by the policy.

Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Pupil signature: \_\_\_\_\_

| FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY   |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <b>Authorised by:</b> |  |
| <b>Date:</b>          |  |

## 11. Appendix 4: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

### Use of mobile phones in our school

- › Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- › Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to a vacant meeting room
- › Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- › Do not use your phone in lessons, or when working with pupils

The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school grounds.

A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available from the school office.

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